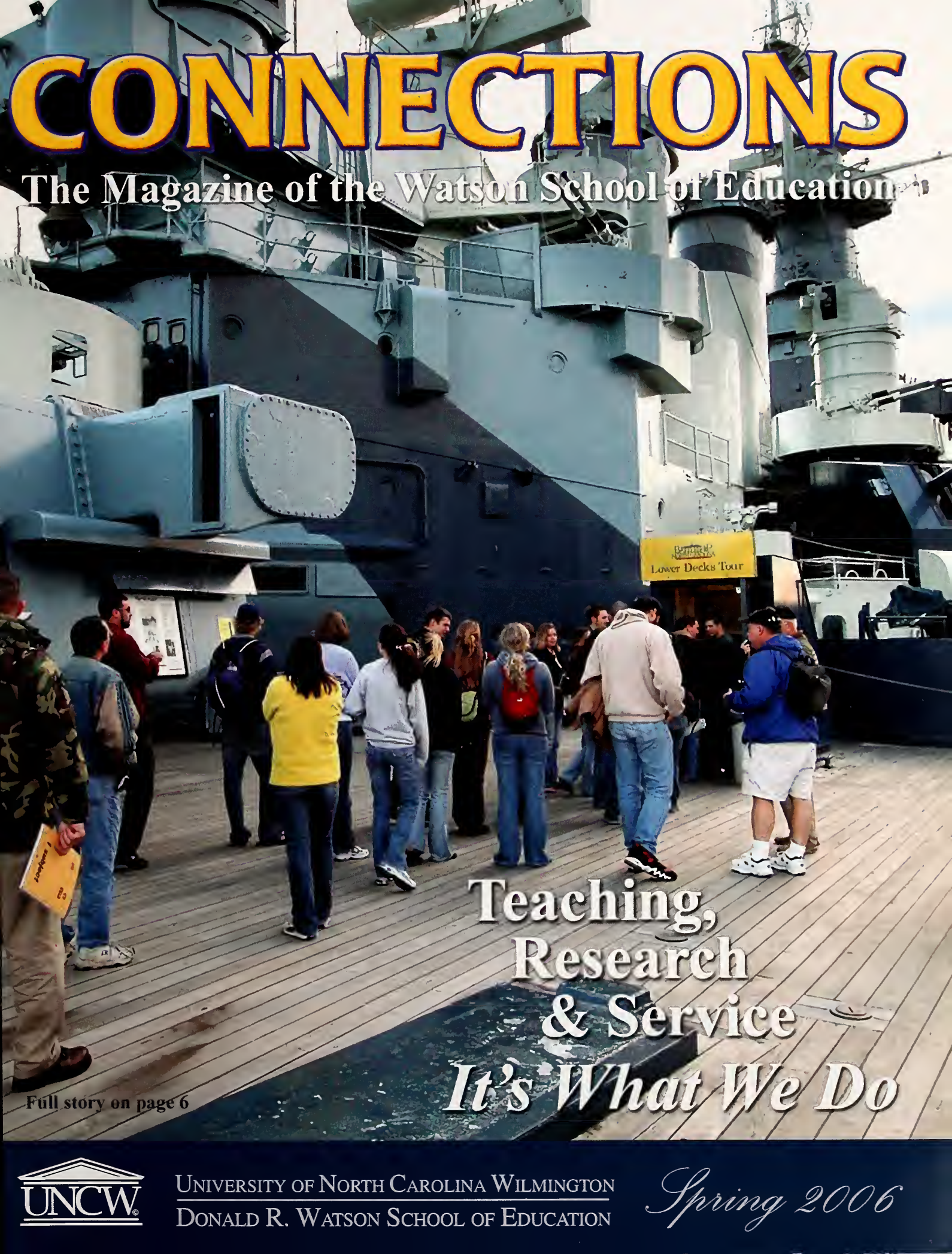


# CONNECTIONS

The Magazine of the Watson School of Education



Teaching,  
Research  
& Service  
*It's What We Do*

Full story on page 6



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON  
DONALD R. WATSON SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

*Spring 2006*



# *A message from the Dean*

## A year of exciting change and growth

This has been a fantastic year for the Watson School of Education. Many exciting things have happened inside the walls of our beautiful building and outside in the region we serve.

Our first Leadership Academy was formed and completed to support Watson School faculty and staff development. In the charter class, eight members learned about the needs of the campus and region and several are moving to a first or more intensive leadership role. The group included Edna Collins, Jeremy Dickerson, Joe Feinberg, Deron Fort, Tracy Hargrove, Dennis Kubasko, Arnold Murdock and Kathy Roney.

Due to the growth of the Watson School, which is now serving more than 1,600 students each academic year, it was imperative to reorganize our departments to better serve our students, faculty and regional school partners. Several reorganization proposals were submitted, discussed and voted on by faculty and staff. The four new departments, effective in the fall of 2006, are Early Childhood and Special Education; Elementary, Middle Level and Literacy Education; Instructional Technology, Foundations and Secondary Education; and Educational Leadership.

The Watson School continues to place students earlier in their programs for hands-on, real world public school experience. This year, we placed 3,041 students for observations as part of 115 methods courses, and we placed 383 interns for semester-long student teaching experiences in our regional schools. We also continue to educate a large percentage of UNCW's master's level students. More than 28 percent of the university's graduate population are students in the Watson School.

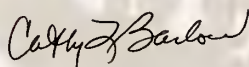
We had several highly qualified new faculty join us this year. Their pictures and biographies appear later in this magazine. We advertised 13 faculty positions this year, and we are still in the process of hiring faculty and staff for the coming academic year. While some of these positions were to fill vacancies left by moves or retirements, several were new positions created due to the incredible growth of our student population and programs.

This year we had the opportunity to "tell our story" through the accreditation process, both national (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education or NCATE) and state (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction). Both accreditation bodies gave the Watson School outstanding exit results. We will report specifics when the results are official. Our North Carolina Teaching Fellows program also received an excellent review this year.

One of the year's most exciting developments was that the Watson School received approval from the state to plan our first doctoral program in educational leadership. The program was proposed in response to a great need in our area for public school administrators. We are also developing AIG (Academically & Intellectually Gifted) and ESL/ELL (English as a Second Language/English Language Learner) programs to broaden the services we offer to our changing region.

Our international programs continue to flourish with formal partnerships in London, England; Osaka, Japan; and Port Elizabeth, South Africa. We have established an international committee that is in the process of selecting one more partnership site in South or Latin America.

There are many more initiatives, programs and faculty we could highlight. I hope we have given you a "taste" of all the excellent things going on within and without our walls. I invite you to become involved with the Watson School as a donor or volunteer to learn more and become a part of our dynamic school.



Cathy L. Barlow  
Dean



*Billy King, director of external affairs for BellSouth's Wilmington region, presents a check to Dean Cathy Barlow for sponsorship of the 2006 Razor Walker Awards. BellSouth has sponsored the ceremony for several years. See related article, page 10.*

### On the Cover

Associate professor Robert Smith discusses an interdisciplinary project with students during a class held aboard the U.S.S. North Carolina. This issue focuses on the exceptional research, innovative teaching and meaningful service activities taking place every day that involve Watson School students, faculty, staff and alumni. The interdisciplinary class on the battleship, story on page 6, is just one example. (UNCW/Jamie Moncrief)



# Watson School of Education Points of Pride

The Watson School's **grant efforts** focus on obtaining funding for collaborative initiatives that address P-16 needs of schools in the southeastern region of North Carolina. Currently funded grants total **more than \$4 million**.

The Watson School was **rated "exemplary"** by the State Board of Education in 2002. Only seven out of 47 North Carolina teacher education programs received this honor.

The Watson School is the **third largest producer of traditionally prepared teachers** out of 47 higher education institutions in North Carolina.

The Watson School moved into the **new Education Building** in September 2004. The 80,500-square-foot facility is designed to provide the **highest-quality instruction** for education professionals.

The passing rate for Watson School graduates on the Praxis II Specialty Area Tests required for licensure is **98 percent**.

In the fall of 2005, **28 percent (303)** of all UNCW graduate students were enrolled in the Watson School of Education.

During the past 10 years, **undergraduate enrollment** in the Watson School has **increased 69 percent**, graduate enrollment 73 percent and the number of licensure-only students has increased 678 percent. During the past 5 years, undergraduate enrollment has grown 26 percent and graduate enrollment 42 percent.\*

During the 2004-2005 academic year, **Watson School faculty published 28 articles** or book chapters, 1 book and 1 documentary film and **made 95 presentations** at international, national, regional and state conferences.

\*Totals include extension programs. Data from Spring 2005 semester.

UNCW is committed to equal educational and employment opportunities and is an affirmative action employer. 5,500 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$7,495.44, or \$1.36 per copy (G.S. 143-170.1).



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## CONNECTIONS

### The Magazine of the Watson School of Education

Published annually by the Watson School of Education at UNCW. We invite your comments and suggestions. Send correspondence to: Watson School of Education, Dean's Office, 326 Education Building, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington, NC 28403-5991, or to Dean Cathy Barlow at [barlowc@uncw.edu](mailto:barlowc@uncw.edu).

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# Leading Change

## Robert Smith

### Tracking high school reform

Robert Smith, associate professor of specialty studies, has focused his research on whole-school models for high school reform, studying numerous case studies of school improvement efforts across the nation. Smith will publish a new book in the summer entitled "Time for Change: New Visions for High School" based on his research.

"High school reform is much more than the current pressure to improve student performance on end of course tests," Smith said. "To me, real reform is rethinking high schools and the way high school environments are structured. There are many examples of how reform is taking place and various models for how it can be done."

Smith said the impetus for his book came from a growing awareness across America that high schools are not working well for a large percentage of students. Recent efforts to address that issue include federal school improvement grants for low performing schools, recommendations in a 2004 report by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and numerous books documenting reform efforts.

"I noticed there was no one resource that pulled together the many ideas about reform within a broader perspective," Smith said. "Case studies describe the changes within a particular high school but we need to view these case studies within the context of what we mean by reform, why we need reform, why these schools were successful and whether these successes can be replicated in other schools."

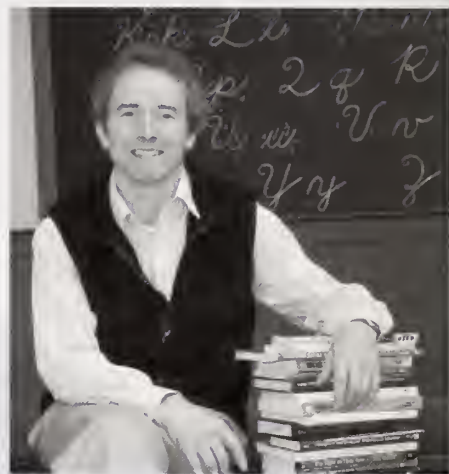
Smith's book addresses some of the most pressing questions related to high school reform such as making school relevant to students, developing an interdisciplinary curriculum and creating a more personalized environment for students. The book also looks at how to address teacher retention and turnover.

Smith said successful reform efforts must improve the environment in which teachers work. In many high schools, educators teach

up to 100 students a day, which precludes meaningful teacher-student relationships. In addition, teachers often have few opportunities for professional development.

"High school is only as effective for students as it is for teachers," Smith said. "If teachers are constantly professionally compromised, then students' education is also going to be compromised. Working conditions, salary, expectations and professional development for teachers are fundamental issues."

Robert Smith will have a new book published this year on high school reform.



## Watson School Faculty Leading Change Through

In addition to teaching and service, one of the primary responsibilities of university faculty members is to conduct meaningful and relevant research. For Watson School of Education faculty, this means research related to the effective preparation of teachers and administrators, successful schools and school improvement, teaching methods and student learning styles and the effects of social issues on education. The following are just a few examples of the many research efforts currently being conducted to increase the knowledge base about the education profession.

## Kathleen Roney

### Defining middle school leadership

Kathleen Roney, assistant professor of curricular studies, wants to know what makes schools successful for students in the middle grades, whether they attend schools that include grades 6 through 8, 7 through 9 or K through 8.

"We're always going to have the middle grades no matter how schools are structured," she said. "Those grades have particular challenges. Schools need to have programs and practices that are responsive to the human development of young adolescents."

One of the keys to successful middle schools, Roney said, is leadership from the principal. In 2003, the National Middle Schools Association (NMSA) published a position statement that articulated the need for "courageous, collaborative leadership" as a characteristic of a developmentally responsive middle school. Working with other researchers across the nation, Roney is helping to provide middle school administrators with solid research and suggestions about how to effectively lead in a middle school environment.

"There wasn't an educational leadership model that specifically addressed the middle school principal," Roney said. "Through our research, we want to better



understand the kind of culture that needs to be created in a middle school in order to enhance student achievement. Then we can define the role that the principal needs to play in creating and nurturing that culture.”

Roney and her colleagues have developed a self-reporting instrument for assessment that middle school principals complete to evaluate their own leadership and that teachers complete with regard to their perceptions of the principal. Using this data, principals can develop a plan for their own developmental growth and for school-wide cultural change. Roney’s team will publish a book about the instrument and its uses this summer, entitled “The Developmentally Responsive Middle Level Principal: A Leadership Model and Measurement Instrument.”

In addition, Roney recently returned from the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) where she and colleagues from the University of Notre Dame presented a paper entitled, “Orienting to the Common Good: Developing a Moral Self in the Middle Grades.”

“We presented the students with moral dilemmas and asked probing questions about how they would solve them,” Roney explained. Roney and her colleagues collected data in schools that they work with to study the development of the moral self during the middle school years.

## Maurice Martinez

### Advocating for undocumented immigrants

While many education faculty document their scholarship through books, papers and conference presentations, Maurice Martinez, professor of specialty studies, communicates his findings through documentary film.

His latest project, *La Vida No Es Facil* (*Life is Not Easy*), examines the ineligibility of undocumented immigrants for in-state tuition at North Carolina’s public universities and how this situation affects the lives of college-aged Latino students. Martinez explores this controversial topic through the stories of three young adults who were born in Mexico but have spent much of their lives in the U.S.

In the documentary, Martinez argues that children of undocumented immigrants should not have to pay out-of-state tuition because an education will give them the ability to contribute to the economy.

Opponents argue that giving undocumented residents in-state opportunities would attract more illegal immigrants to the state and prevent U.S. citizens from attending North Carolina universities. Martinez disagrees, citing the ease with which many students from other states obtain in-state tuition simply by living in North Carolina for one year.

“Students who have lived here for most of their lives are more North Carolinians than somebody who comes here for a year

and hangs out and gets in-state tuition,” he said.

Martinez, a New Orleans-born poet, musician and filmmaker whose academic focus is multicultural education, also produced and directed an award-winning documentary called *The Black Indians of New Orleans*. Most recently, he directed *The Quorum*, which documented social change and racial integration in a New Orleans coffee house during the 1960s.

The undocumented students Martinez profiles in his latest film are children of poor farm workers, many of whom migrate with the crops. They have all worked in the fields from an early age and understand the value of an education. *La Vida No Es Facil* asks why society would choose to deny these eager students access to an education.

“These kids have assimilated and acculturated to American norms,” Martinez said. “They are more American, one might say, than Mexican. Hopefully the public will get a clearer understanding of these children, who should not be punished for the impoverished human condition of their parents.

“America’s most neglected resource is low-income students in higher education.”

## Catherine Nesbit

### Success with science notebooks

As U.S. education professionals work to improve science literacy, many school districts are adding inquiry-based science to the curriculum, involving students in teacher guided exploration using hands-on activities. Students document their findings in science notebooks and use writing to reflect on their learning.

“Science notebooking is very student centered—the students get to own what they’re investigating,” said Catherine Nesbit, associate professor of specialty studies. “Research has shown that using an inquiry-oriented approach that includes science notebooks improves achievement scores in reading, writing, math and science.”

**Continued on page 9**

# Research



(Top) Maurice Martinez chronicled the plight of college-age children of undocumented immigrants in a new documentary film. (Photo courtesy of the Star-News)

(Bottom) Kathleen Roney is developing an educational leadership model for middle school principals.





## Battleship Experience Spurs Thinking Across the

It's a chilly fall evening aboard the *U.S.S. North Carolina*, where a large group of UNCW teacher education students is huddled in the mess hall awaiting their instructions. They have been given a challenge that for many of them will mean thinking about teaching—and learning—in a different way.

They are all students working toward licensure in math, science or social studies at the middle or high school level and whose undergraduate degrees are in one of those subject areas. Tonight, faculty members Dennis Kubasko and Robert Smith in the Watson School of Education and Denise Terry in the Department of Mathematics are asking them to think outside their content areas and work with peers from other disciplines.

"This experience is designed to meet a couple of objectives," said assistant professor Dennis Kubasko, who teaches secondary science methods. "We want our teacher education students to experience and practice multidisciplinary planning and teaching. We also want them to think about how they can incorporate informal learning settings, like the battleship, into their lessons while still meeting state curriculum requirements."

### Encouraging interdisciplinary thinking

Many schools are moving toward interdisciplinary education or thematically based lessons in the curriculum, Kubasko said, as part of school improvement efforts and the need to make lessons

more valuable and relevant to students. Kubasko and his colleagues want to expose students to interdisciplinary methods so they will be prepared to incorporate these approaches into their teaching.

For the battleship project, the methods classes broke up into small teams that included students from all three disciplines. Each team's task was to plan a field trip lesson for high school students that incorporated math, science and social studies learning about a particular department of the ship. For example, one team focused on navigation and determined how sailors plotted their location and navigated the battleship during World War II.

Tours, guidance and original ship artifacts and materials were provided to the teams by battleship curator Mary Ames Sheret and museum services director Kim Sincox.

Assistant professor Denise Terry, who teaches math methods, said interdisciplinary teaching can be a challenge for math teachers and she sees the project as a way for them to explore the possibilities.

"Math teachers have a tendency to teach in an isolated way," said Terry. "But their students don't live in a math world. They live in a natural world, a multidisciplinary world. This is a way to encourage math education students to think differently and look at how math concepts can be applied in new ways."





*Teacher education students in science, math and social studies tour the U.S.S. North Carolina to gather information for their interdisciplinary lesson planning.*

*(Far Left) Students learn about the ship's navigation systems.*

*(Below) Faculty members Denise Terry, left, and Dennis Kubasko answer student questions about the interdisciplinary project.*



# Disciplines

## Teacher collaboration and support

Brooke Hazelwood, who will graduate from the Master of Arts in Teaching program in Dec. 2006, said she believes interdisciplinary education will become even more widely used and it's important for students to understand how to use it effectively.

"One of the reasons teachers leave the profession is that they complain of isolation," Hazelwood said. "This experience was very collaborative between the students from the different

disciplines. It's a way for teachers to keep their lessons fresher and more interesting and also offer each other support."

She added that interdisciplinary teaching also keeps students motivated because it fosters hands-on participation and gets students involved in their own learning.

"Too many students are used to being talked at rather than actually engaged in an activity," she explained. "With interdisciplinary approaches, you can see the light bulbs going off in their heads because they're experiencing the learning first hand."

## Fostering research

This is the fourth year that Kubasko has taken his science methods classes to the battleship. Last year, both science and social studies classes were involved, and math methods students were added this year. Kubasko, Terry and Smith plan to continue the collaboration and to begin a research project to study the impact this experience is having on teacher education students.

"There's not a lot of research available about interdisciplinary education," said Smith. "We're going to survey and interview the students to see what they thought of this experience and how they plan to use what they've learned in their teaching."



*Student team members take notes during the tour of the ship.*



## Freshman Teaching Fellows Serve as Role Models for Seventh Graders

On many days, if you walk into Tiffany Tobe's seventh grade class at Myrtle Grove Middle School and take a look around the room, you'll see some students whose bodies no longer quite fit the middle-school size desks and chairs, and whose faces reflect a maturity that their peers have not yet reached.

While at first glance it may seem that these "students" don't belong, they have become an integral part of the life of this class. As freshman UNCW Teaching Fellows, they have become the pen pals and tutors of the seventh graders, helping them with their studies and encouraging them to plan to attend college.

According to Kathleen Benzaquin, UNCW Teaching Fellows director, it's a natural fit, providing support and motivation to the middle school students and classroom experience to the prospective teachers.

"We're targeting the middle grades and working with that age group to help them believe in themselves and set goals to go to college," said Benzaquin.

"For our freshmen, it's a chance to spend time in a classroom in a unique way."

During the fall semester, the Teaching Fellows wrote several letters to their middle school pen pals, getting to know them and learning their interests. In December, the fellows went to Myrtle Grove to meet their pen pals in person at a class pizza party.

This spring, the fellows were in the classroom, working with the students one-on-one and in small groups and teaching lessons to the entire class under Tobe's supervision.

In addition to assisting the students, the fellows observe the entire classroom process and learn about issues such as classroom management and the many other responsibilities teachers have beyond delivering instruction.

"We strike a balance between giving the Teaching Fellows what they need and giving my students what they need, and



everyone is showing growth," said Tobe, a 2003 graduate of the Watson School in middle grades education, a Teaching Fellows alumna and a current graduate student. "The fellows provide another role model in the classroom to show my students they can go to college and be successful."

UNCW had 45 freshman fellows during the 2005-06 school year, which was a lot of students for Tobe to accommodate but she did it with planning and an organized schedule. Each fellow spends at least one hour a week in her classroom.

"We're very fortunate to have a teacher who is willing to let us be a part of her

## Student Perspectives

**"Being in a seventh grade classroom has helped me reaffirm beliefs I had about teaching at this level. I have always thought middle school teachers should be tough but still let their students know they are there for them."**

**Graham Elmore**  
Middle school math and science

**"Being part of the pen pal project has provided me with hands-on experience and with the opportunity to immerse myself in the classroom. It's reinforced my original desire to become a teacher."**

**Adrienne Cannady**  
High school special education

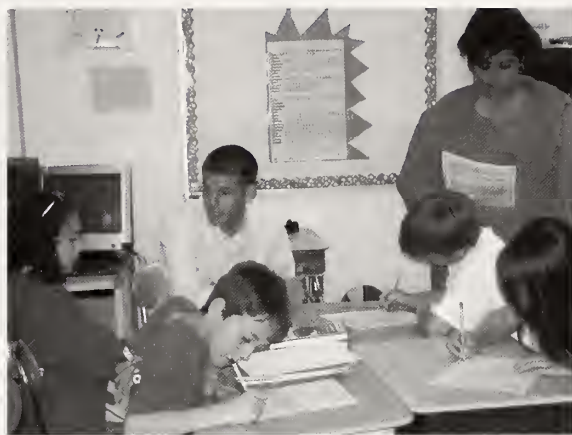
**"Middle school teachers have to have a lot of discipline and motivate the students—they have to keep pushing them all the time. My teaching will definitely benefit from this experience."**

**Jennifer Morris**  
Elementary education





*(Left) Adrienne Cannady works on a project with her seventh grade group.*

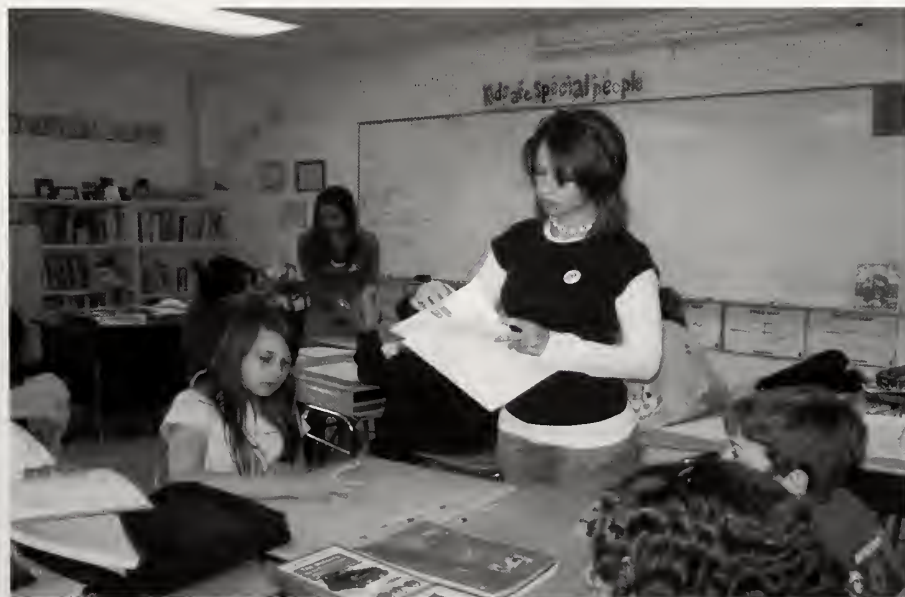


*(Below) Graham Elmore works with seventh grade students as teacher Tiffany Tobe '03 looks on.*

class in this way," said Benzaquin. "The ongoing pen pal relationship is the real hook for the Teaching Fellows. It gets them excited about going to the school and about teaching because they are making meaningful contact with kids."

In April, Tobe's class visited the UNCW campus as guests of their pen pals. They had lunch with the Teaching Fellows, toured the campus and learned about college life.

North Carolina Teaching Fellows is a statewide program that provides a four-year scholarship each year to 500 outstanding high school seniors. The students receive specialized instruction to become teachers in exchange for their agreement to teach for four years after graduation in a North Carolina public school.



*Teaching Fellow Jennifer Morris hands out worksheets as Adrienne Cannady answers a student's question in the background.*

## Research, continued from page 5

That interdisciplinary emphasis will be critical, Nesbit said, as North Carolina begins testing science knowledge during the 2007-08 school year. Because teachers have felt pressure to focus on reading, writing and math, science has often been neglected. Nesbit sees science notebooks as a tool teachers can use to add more science into the curriculum.

"The strength of elementary teachers tends to be in the area of literacy," Nesbit explained, "so we show them how they can use writing to teach science. Notebooks have been used by DaVinci, Darwin and everyday scientists to document and reflect upon their findings. It's an authentic scientific method."

Science notebooks are used across North Carolina under the auspices of the N.C. Infrastructure for Science Education (NC-ISE), with three regional centers that provide teacher education and support. The eastern regional center is housed at UNCW. Through the center, Nesbit and her colleagues are conducting research to determine how science notebooks can be used most effectively. They also offer workshops for teachers.

Nesbit is involved in examining case studies with colleagues at Stanford and Washington State. Faculty are documenting the use of science notebooks and the results that are being achieved. Nesbit is working with Jordan Brady at Blair Elementary School in Wilmington, observing her teaching and reviewing the notebooks of her students.

"We're looking at best practices in the use of science notebooks," Nesbit said. "Many teachers are doing well with structured science notebooking—telling students what to do at each step of the investigation. We want them to take it a step further and let the students ask their own questions and initiate their own investigations. That is very possible even with young children."



*Catherine Nesbit, center, works with part-time faculty member Cynthia Rogers and elementary teacher and graduate student Jordan Brady on a science notebook lesson involving tops.*





# Razor Walker Awards

## NC Leaders Making a Difference in the Lives of Children

### 2005 Razor Walker Honorees

#### Michael C. Blackwell

*"Michael Blackwell was prepared for an outstanding career in journalism... he*



*considers it more of a special privilege to work for children especially those that are abused and neglected."*

Blackwell is known throughout N.C. as a tireless advocate for children and youth.

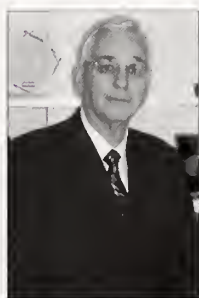
As president of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, he leads an organization that has served thousands of neglected, orphaned and abused children of all races, faiths and backgrounds.

Since 1993, the Watson School of Education has honored individuals whose vision, tenacity, courage and sacrifice have made a difference in the lives of young people in North Carolina. Many of these individuals have overcome great obstacles and taken significant professional risk, walking the "razor's edge" to support the education and health of children and youth.

The honorees for 2005 and 2006 are listed below, with comments from their nominators quoted. The Razor Walker Awards celebrate the efforts, achievements and contributions of these special people, who believe so strongly that our children are our most precious resource.

#### James F. Causby

*"Dr. Causby is one of those people who has made a real difference in the quality*



*of ALL public schools, while leading his own school system with vision, tenacity and courage."* Highly regarded nationally for his success in leading school systems and their communities through

change, Causby's efforts as superintendent of the Johnston County Schools resulted in improved student achievement and community pride. Through his leadership, Johnston County became a national leader in the community involvement process for school restructuring.

#### Elizabeth Hill Frasier

*"Hilly, as she is known by those who love her, has made the education of children*



*her life. Her keen desire for children to feel positive about themselves and their world has been a driving force throughout her professional career."* An advocate of non-violent discipline as both a teacher and

principal, Frasier refused to allow corporal punishment in her classroom and her school when it was still legally allowed. Her commitment and patience helped guide numerous teachers to find more creative, humane and effective ways to deal with classroom disruptions.

#### James E. Holshouser Jr.

*"As governor of our great state from 1973 to 1977, Jim Holshouser presided over the consolidation of all the state's senior colleges and universities into the*



*University of North Carolina system. Higher education has long been one of Gov. Holshouser's passions."* Secure in his place in the state's political history, Holshouser is equally recognizable as a stalwart

leader in higher education. He was a resolute member of the leadership team that joined forces with North Carolinians for Educational Opportunity to seek voter approval of the 2000 Higher Education Improvement Bonds, securing the support of all 100 counties in the state.



## 2006 Razor Walker Honorees

### Camp Special Time Wanda Jo Bass and Angie West

*"Serving as role models, Wanda and Angie teach skills that only the real world can provide."* Pediatric nurses Angie West '00 and Wanda Bass of



Angie West '00



Wanda Jo Bass

Wilmington created Camp Special Time, a free weekend program for children with special needs from military families at Camp Lejeune. The children experience a fun and loving night away from home while their parents receive a much-needed respite from continuous care. Marine volunteers and students from UNCW and Cape Fear Community College gain hands-on experience, skills and confidence as they care for and interact with children with varying degrees of disabilities.

### Jack A. Menius, D.D.S.

*"In 1961 a young pediatric dentist left private practice to work at an institution*



*for the severely handicapped. The rest is history—a lifetime of service, advocacy and ultimately statewide impact."* As head of the dental clinic at the Murdoch Center in Butner from 1961-1968, Menius found

that a large number of disabled children and young adults were afflicted with rampant, untreated dental disease and associated dental pain. He became a tireless and persistent advocate, alerting the dental profession and public policy makers to the oral health problems of special needs children.

### Lloyd V. Hackley

*"As chancellor of Fayetteville State University, Lloyd Hackley led that institution through a period of growth and increased academic achievement. He is a recognized figure nationally in*



*character education."* Hackley is chancellor emeritus of Fayetteville State University, chairman emeritus of the national CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition and a nationally certified ethics and character development

instructor. He has also served as president of the North Carolina Community College System and has chaired the North Carolina Child Advocacy Institute, the Arkansas Civil Rights Commission and the President's Advisory Board on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

### David L. Jones

*"David has given of his time, talent and resources to numerous organizations and affiliations. Our community has been positively influenced because of this."* David Jones has worked with, supported

and contributed to local institutions and organizations that include UNCW, the



Club, a member of the Board of Visitors and has been instrumental in raising funds for scholarships.

### Noel K. Jones

*"Noel Jones, literacy scholar, educational leader and master teacher, exemplifies life-long commitment to*



*the highest standards of excellence in literary programs and practices."* In 1990, Jones initiated the study of a new literacy program originating in New Zealand called Reading Recovery. He led the acceptance of

this program by the literacy faculty and served as program director at UNCW, which became one of only 22 university training centers for Reading Recovery in the United States. He has been instrumental in the development of strong literacy programs at numerous public schools.

### Beverly Eaves Perdue

*"Beverly Perdue has been a champion for the causes affecting the children and youth of N. C. Serving daily as the state's second highest elected official, she maintains her commitment, service and unwavering dedication to the causes*



*and initiatives that affect our children most."* A former public school teacher, health care professional and co-chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Lieutenant Governor Beverly Perdue has been a key figure in shaping our state's successful agenda for educational excellence; accessible healthcare; and sustainable economic prosperity for North Carolina's families.

### Phillip J. Kirk Jr.

*"During Phil Kirk's tenure at NCCBI, the organization took the lead in*



*successfully working for passage of the largest K-12 and higher education bond referenda in the state's history."* Kirk served as president of the North Carolina Center for Business and Industry for 16 years. During his

long tenure, he worked with the business community to encourage unwavering support of school improvement efforts at all levels of education. He has consistently emphasized public education and other programs for children throughout his career.



## Grants from Piedmont Natural Gas Support Watson School Projects

Piedmont Natural Gas has given the Watson School two grants to support projects that provide outreach and support to schools and the community.

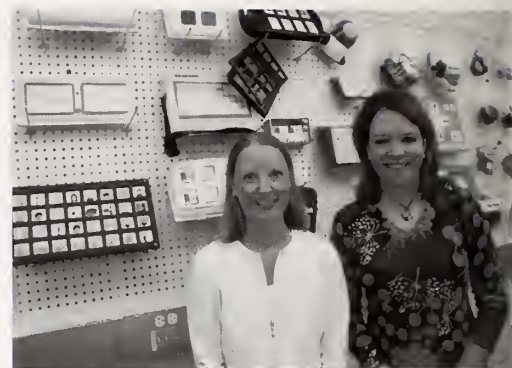
The company has provided \$1,500 to help fund assistive technologies equipment for children and adults with special needs as well as \$2,500 to provide books for children who are tutored by Watson School students through the Education Laboratory.

Assistant professors Linda Mechling and Monica Campbell are developing an assistive technology demonstration model and lending library for people who provide education, therapy, intervention and care for persons with disabilities. The model facility provides hands-on learning for educators and caregivers.

"We want this to be a lending library of resources that will help teachers learn about new technologies and solutions," said Mechling. Faculty will also use the facility to demonstrate specific devices and software during classes and training sessions.

Funds from Piedmont Natural Gas have helped purchase aids to independent living that help people with disabilities perform daily tasks such as prepare food and dress themselves.

For the Education Lab, the Piedmont gift will provide a book that each child served



Linda Mechling and Monica Campbell in the Assistive Technology Lab.

by the lab will be able to take home after using it in a tutoring session.

"The public school students we serve in the Ed Lab have difficulty with reading and/or math," said lab co-director Adelaide Kopotic. "It will be wonderful to assist these children even more by providing them with their own personal book to keep. This gesture sends a strong message about the importance of books and will assist each child in starting a personal library."

The two-year grant will provide books for about 370 children. The funds will also be used to purchase a set of 150 books to be kept available in the lab for use during tutoring sessions.



## In Memoriam

### Professor Grace Burton Leaves Legacy of Commitment to Education

Grace M. Burton, professor emerita in the Department of Curricular Studies, died of cancer at the Lower Cape Fear Hospice on October 23, 2005.

Burton joined the faculty of UNCW in 1977. She served as the chair of Curricular Studies from 1996 to 2001 and retired as a full professor in 2003. She held key leadership positions in several professional societies and committees, published more than 100 articles, authored college and elementary school textbooks and presented at hundreds of professional conferences.

Her honors included the UNCW Board of Trustees Teaching Excellence Award, the UNCW Distinguished Teaching Fellowship and the YWCA Woman of Achievement Award in Education.

But even more than for these accomplishments Burton will be remembered for her

commitment to the growth and development of students, her support of faculty colleagues, her dedication to the success of the Watson School and her financial generosity to academic and other worthy causes.

In August 2003 Burton was recognized for her \$50,000 gift to the Watson School to support the North Carolina Teachers Legacy Hall. Also, in March 2000, she established the Promise of Excellence in Teaching endowment, which provides an annual award to an education intern who has shown commitment to education, enthusiasm for teaching and genuine concern for intellectual and emotional growth. She has also funded a

fellowship for a high achieving full-time graduate student in elementary, reading, middle school or special education. Students of today and tomorrow will continue to feel her presence as a direct result of her generosity.



Burton is survived by her son, Michael J. Burton of Athens, Ohio, and her daughter, Rebecca S. Burton of Milwaukee, Wis. She was very proud of her two children, both of whom earned doctorates and became college professors.

Donations to benefit future educators may be made payable to UNCW and sent to the Grace M. Burton Promise of Excellence Fellowship, Watson School of Education, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington, NC 28403.



## Watson School Plans Doctoral Degree

UNCW received approval in April to begin planning its second doctoral degree and plans to enroll its first students in fall 2007.

The North Carolina Graduate Council unanimously approved the Watson School of Education's "request to authorize the planning process" for a doctoral program in educational leadership and administration. This is the second step in the process to establish a new degree.

UNCW submitted its initial proposal to the graduate council in August 2005. With the council's recent approval, the Doctoral Planning Committee will fully develop the program and submit a proposal to establish the degree program during the fall semester of 2006, with final authorization on the agenda for approval at the April 2007 council meeting.

The mission of the proposed Ed.D. program is to prepare superintendents and other education leaders to be informed, proactive and reflective change agents to improve public schools for the benefit of all students, particularly in southeastern North Carolina. About 15-20 students are expected to be part of the first class.

Dean Cathy Barlow said educators in the 10-county region that participates in the Watson School's Professional Development System were involved in the planning process. "They are so excited about this program," she said. "The need is great in each of the counties we serve."

"The teacher shortage in North Carolina is fairly extreme, but the administrator shortage is just as extreme. There is a strong demand for superintendents and other educational leaders," said John Fischetti, chair of the Doctoral Planning Committee. He noted that about half a dozen individuals from each county in the region have expressed an interest in participating in the program.

*Dean Cathy Barlow addresses school representatives during the PDS contract signing. (UNCW/Jamie Moncrief)*



## University-School PDS Partnerships Renewed

Each year, several hundred Watson School students receive hands-on experience in area public schools, hundreds of teachers receive continuing education and dozens of university faculty work with school teams to address critical issues.

These activities have been happening for 14 years through the nationally recognized Professional Development System (PDS) partnerships with 10 public school districts in southeastern North Carolina. A formal contract signing and celebration was held in July to renew the university-school partnerships.

The PDS partners work to improve learning opportunities for all students; enhance the curriculum and school culture; and prepare new teachers and administrators in a collegial environment. More than 1,300 educators in 101 schools are part of the PDS system.

Due to this successful partnership, UNCW is one of five universities invited to participate in a national initiative to strengthen teacher education through the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education.

## Carolina Piano Trio Presents Music Workshop for Elementary Interns

In January, the Carolina Piano Trio visited UNCW as part of Homage to Mozart, a week-long celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of one of the world's best-loved composers. While on campus, the trio presented a lecture/recital for elementary interns enrolled in EDN 414, "Exploring the Cultural Arts."

The session, which was held in the North Carolina Teachers Legacy Hall in the Education Building, was intended to help elementary teacher education students better understand how to prepare children to listen to music. The lecture focused on listening for particular elements of music, such as rhythm, tone, dynamics, melody and repetition during the trio's live performance, which included Mozart's Trio in C Major, K. 548.

One of the region's premier chamber ensembles, the Carolina Piano Trio was formed by three nationally acclaimed soloists (Jacqui Carrasco, violin; Elizabeth Anderson, cello; and Barbara McKenzie,

piano) in 1998 as the core ensemble for the American Music Festival and the Chamber Music Society of Wilmington. The trio was the in-residence ensemble for the entire Homage to Mozart festival, providing enrichment and outreach with classes and performances on campus, at local schools and at selected venues in the Wilmington community.



*The Carolina Piano Trio performs for elementary education students at a lecture/recital in the North Carolina Teachers Legacy Hall.*



## Watson School Faculty Recognized for Dedication to Student Advising

Two Watson School of Education faculty members have been honored by the University College for their excellence in student advising.

Kathleen (KB) Benzaquin, lecturer and director of the UNCW Teaching Fellows Program, was named University College Advisor of the Year. Deron Fort, field experience advisor and coordinator, was one of four advisors from across the campus to be named a University College Advisor of Excellence.

"Both KB and Deron have excellent track records as faculty advisors," said Kemille Moore, dean of the University College. "Their students feel well-served and consistently indicate that they are comfortable with their advisor. I have worked closely with both of them and they exemplify the highest standards in academic advising. They are friendly, student-centered and professional."

University College was created to provide academic advising and support to UNCW students from the time of their admission until their acceptance into majors, which is usually in their sophomore year. Through its academic advisors, University College works with students in their formative semesters to ensure that they make a successful transition to UNCW, maintain good academic standing and develop their interests, skills and talents to the fullest extent.

## Grant to Support Schools with At-Risk Students

Karen Wetherill, associate dean for outreach alliances in the Watson School, and Robert Blundo, professor in the Department of Social Work, have received a grant for nearly \$300,000 to support schools with at-risk students.

The Coalitions 4 Success program is

To do this, University College advisors must be familiar with all of the UNCW basic studies requirements, the prerequisites that must be met in order to declare a major. While Benzaquin and Fort are assigned students who have indicated an interest in majoring in education, they must be familiar with the requirements for all of the university's programs in order to advise students who eventually decide to pursue a different major. Nearly 60 percent of undergraduates change their mind about their major at some point during their program of study, according to Moore.

Benzaquin has been an undergraduate faculty advisor since she came to UNCW in 1993. Previously, she had worked as an advisor for the College of Arts and Sciences at UNC Chapel Hill. She advises all of the Teaching Fellows from their entrance as freshmen until they declare a major. She said she enjoys serving as an advocate for students and making sure they have the most positive and productive experience possible at UNCW.

"I like the personal side of advising," she said. "I want the students to feel that they can come in any time for help and they will be a priority. My job is to help them be successful and I want them to know that

designed to help fulfill the mission of the federal "No Child Left Behind" legislation by creating partnerships to increase the success of at-risk, diverse student populations. UNCW faculty will work directly with 30 teachers and administrators from five high schools in Brunswick, New Hanover and Pender Counties.



University College faculty advising honorees Kathleen Benzaquin and Deron Fort

their success and their time at UNCW are important to the university and to me."

Fort has been advising for University College for about four years and has between 35 and 40 advisees each year. While the time commitment for advising varies greatly throughout the year, Fort says it is intensive during the advising period each semester, when he must devote one to three hours a day to advising for about a month.

"I really love it," he said of the advising experience. "I can relate to students that age who know it's important to have a college education but aren't sure exactly what they want to do professionally. I enjoy talking with them about career opportunities and advising them on the directions they might take. It's a great way to stay connected to the whole university and also to introduce students to possible careers in education that they may not have considered."

The program will provide instruction and support through applied workshops, face-to-face meetings, school-based study group sessions and on-line interaction. The curriculum is designed to help the school teams better understand student needs and develop and implement strategic plans to meet them.



The Watson School welcomed several new faculty members for the 2005-06 academic year.

## Department of Specialty Studies

**Kenneth A. Anderson**, assistant professor, earned his Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from NC State University and received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from UNC Greensboro. His dissertation was entitled *Evaluating the Effects of Mentoring on the Achievement of African American Males in the Context of No Child Left Behind*. Anderson is primarily working with the master's program in Curriculum, Instruction and Supervision and teaches foundations of education. His research interests include curriculum and instructional supervision, African American male achievement, mentoring and program evaluation.



**Howard V. Coleman**, assistant professor, received his B.A. and master's degrees from UNC Greensboro and his doctorate in administration from UNC Chapel Hill. He has been a principal and superintendent in North Carolina and most recently was

director of research for the Greenville, S.C. schools. He works with the School Administration master's program and teaches foundations of education. He has worked and consulted in the areas of charter schools, No Child

Left Behind, effective leadership practices and on-line high schools.



**S. Beth Allred '96, '05M**, lecturer, is a nine-year veteran mathematics teacher who earned her national board certification. She joins the Watson School as one of our two Emerging Technology Liaisons, working on faculty development, teaching in the undergraduate programs and serving our outreach efforts. Beth is a UNCW graduate in mathematics and received her M.S. in the Master's of Instructional Technology program. Her research interests are in the areas of online instruction, web enhanced instruction and instructional design.



## Department of Curricular Studies

**Elizabeth B. Ambe**, assistant professor, is a language and literacy specialist with an emphasis on reading. She received her M.Ed. and Ph.D. from the University of Southern Mississippi and her B.A. as well as a post-graduate diploma in education from the University of Yaounde, Cameroon. She has 19 years of international teaching experience with students in elementary, middle, high school and higher education, as well as professional ESL learners at the International School of Aviation. She also consulted for UNICEF in Niger, West Africa, and conducted research on education and early marriages of girls in Niger. Her research interests are in the areas of clinical diagnosis and assessment for literacy, content area literacy and multicultural education.



**Kathleen A. Schlichting '86, '92M**, associate professor, received her Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina in elementary education with specialization in language arts and literacy. She earned her M.Ed. and B.A. from UNCW in elementary education and a nursing degree from Brookdale College in Lincroft, N.J. Her experiences include



serving as the department chair and faculty member of Literacy Education at Dowling College, an instructor at UNCW, director and consultant for Crossroads of North Carolina and an elementary teacher. Her awards include the Dowling College Pride Award, Distinguished Doctoral Student Award (University of South Carolina) and Graduate Achievement Award (UNCW). Her research focuses on informing and enhancing children's language and literacy development.

**Brenda M. Wheat**, assistant professor, received her Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction from the University of Texas at Austin. She earned her M.Ed. in music education and B.S. in education from the University of Georgia. She received seven scholarships supporting and honoring her academic pursuits. Her teaching experience includes 11 years in diverse settings at the elementary and middle school levels as a classroom teacher, a gifted and talented specialist and a music specialist. Her research examines the contributions of the arts to teaching and learning, arts education and integrated curriculum.



## Teacher in Residence

**Beth Metcalf '99, '05M** is the Watson School's new teacher in residence, replacing Carol Midgett, who retired from the position. Metcalf received her B.A. in elementary education and her M.E. in Curriculum, Instruction and Supervision from UNCW. Her primary areas of focus are directing the National Board Certification Support program, leading the First Years of Teaching Support program and working with teachers and administrators in the Professional Development System partnership districts. Before joining the Watson School, Metcalf was a teacher at Bradley Creek Elementary School. She is a national board certified teacher.





## Eric Pfirman Receives WSE Graduate Teaching Award

As a graduate student, Eric Pfirman '06M was working toward becoming a high school principal. The Watson School's faculty and administrators, however, thought he did a great job as a university-level teacher.

Pfirman was chosen to receive the WSE Graduate Teaching Award for 2005 based on his strong rapport with undergraduate teacher education candidates. As a teacher himself, Pfirman said he was able to identify with the students and help them understand the realities of their chosen profession.

"A lot of teacher education students want to go into teaching because they had great teachers who inspired them and those teachers were so good at what they did that they made it look effortless," said Pfirman.

"Teaching is certainly not effortless and I want our students to understand lesson planning, day-to-day paperwork, classroom management and other non-teaching duties. I can talk to them about what it's really like to work in a school and that there's a lot more to the job than having fun with kids."

Pfirman taught social studies for six years at Statesville High School and is now a North Carolina Principal Fellow. He developed an interest in becoming an administrator through coaching the Statesville High women's varsity soccer team and working closely with parents and the community on a charity tournament.

"I really enjoy that collaboration between the school and the community," he said. "There are also difficult parts of being an administrator but once parents understand that anything you do with their child is coming from a place of caring, it's really a win-win situation."

As a Principal Fellow, Pfirman served as an intern in local schools. Since he did not have any experience teaching at the elementary or middle school levels, he interned for a semester each at Snipes



*Principal Fellow Eric Pfirman '06M meets with teachers at Topsail Middle School, where he completed an internship this spring.*

Elementary and Topsail Middle schools. He said he enjoyed both experiences, especially the "hugs and high fives" that come from the younger students.

Pfirman completed the two-year Principal Fellows program this year and graduated in May with a master's degree in school administration. He has accepted a position as an assistant principal in the New Hanover County Schools but has not yet been assigned to a school.

"I enjoy making good things happen and working with people, wherever that may be," he said.

## Fullwood Named District 2 Teacher Assistant of the Year

When Dwight Willis became principal of Supply Elementary School two years ago, Ada Fullwood made an immediate impression on him.

"She came up to me and said, 'I'm Ada Fullwood and I'm here to make a difference.' You don't get any better than that," he said. "If you ask her for something, she smiles and says, 'Whatever you need me to do.' And you know she will do it graciously and with great spirit and attitude."

Apparently, many people share those impressions of Fullwood. A 19-year veteran teaching assistant, she was named District 2 Teacher Assistant of the Year for the second time in less than a decade. A part-time bus driver, full-time teaching assistant, parent of three teenage children, wife and devoted member of her church, Fullwood describes herself as "persistent and aggressive," with a "Sergeant Carter" mentality. But

behind the tough façade is a loving teacher who gets to know each of her students individually.

"I like to make the light come on and doing that just depends on the child," she said. "The child is number one. No two days are alike in this job."

Fullwood has also spent nearly 20 years on and off completing her teaching degree at the Watson School. She said she will be able to put into practice what she has learned as a teaching assistant and as a teacher education student when she student teaches at a different school in the fall.

When she graduates from UNCW next year, there will be a place open for her at Supply Elementary. "I'm anxious to hire her," Willis said. "She is already a great teacher. Now she will have the credentials to be a teacher."



*Ada Fullwood reads to students at Supply Elementary. Photo courtesy of the State Port Pilot.*

*Editor's Note: This story excerpted from an article by Hilary Snow in the March 15, 2006, edition of the State Port Pilot.*



# Geochron Helps Students Understand Changing Seasons

Professor and science educator Rich Huber finds that there is a lot of confusion among his students about what causes the seasons to change. When working with future science teachers, Huber wants to make sure students understand seasonal change so that they can teach it correctly to their students.

"Most adults are totally confused about what causes the seasons," he said. "Almost everyone thinks we're closer to the sun in the summer when in fact we're not."

Because the earth's orbit around the sun is almost circular, our proximity to the sun stays fairly constant all year. The tilt of the earth on its axis also remains constant at 23.5 degrees. What does change is which hemisphere is receiving the most direct solar radiation.

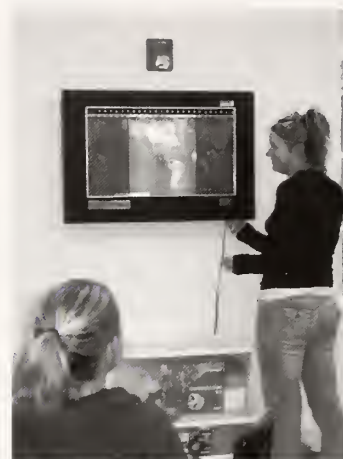
For years, Huber has searched for a tool that would help him illustrate this concept

to teacher education students in his science methods classes. Now the Watson School has one, the Geochron Global Time Indicator. An analog world timepiece in vivid color, the Geochron looks like a framed map of the world but automatically shows where on earth it is daylight or darkness at the moment the map is viewed. Its ever-changing areas of day and night make a complete cycle every 24 hours and gradually changes shape with the seasons.

The Geochron can be manually moved forward to determine sunrise and sunset, as well as the hours of daylight at any location on any future date. Purchased with grant funds, it is located in the Education Building's science lab.

"This is a great tool for teaching about the seasons," said Huber. "It's so important to incorporate globalization into our teaching and make sure our students

understand global concepts. With this tool, I can clearly illustrate the concept of the changing seasons and how they affect various parts of the world."



*Student Whitney McSwain adjusts the Geochron Global Time Indicator to illustrate what parts of the earth are in darkness and in light during Professor Rich Huber's science methods class on March 31, the vernal equinox.*

## Watson School Alumni Shine as Brunswick County Teachers

For the past two years, the Brunswick County Teacher of the Year has been an alumna of the Watson School of Education and a teacher at North Brunswick High School.

**Maggie Lineberger**, recently named the county's 2006 Teacher of the Year, received her master's degree in education in 2005 and **Leslie Newman**, the 2005 recipient, graduated this May from the Watson School's language and literacy program. Lineberger teaches math at North Brunswick, while Newman teaches English.



*Maggie Lineberger '05M*

Lineberger holds a business administration degree from UNC-Chapel Hill and entered the education profession as a lateral entry teacher. A native of Oak Island, she

was valedictorian of her graduating class at South Brunswick High School.

In addition to high school math, Lineberger is certified in middle grades math and gifted instruction. She is working on certification in curriculum and instruction. In addition, she serves on the North Carolina Partnership for Math and Science and coaches the North Brunswick girls' track team.

Principal Deanne Meadows said Lineberger's personal approach to learning is a big part of her success with students.

"She is definitely a lifelong learner," Meadows said. "She makes adjustments in her classroom. She is creative. She uses a variety of strategies to motivate kids. Any opportunity she has to learn, she takes advantage of it."

Newman is one of eight core teachers in North Brunswick's freshman academy, a

transitional program that helps students develop the skills they need to be successful in high school. She received her undergraduate degree from Westminster College in New Wilmington, Penn. She has been in North Carolina for 7 years, teaching for 4 years in Hoke County before moving to Brunswick County.

She said that teaching ninth graders is a challenge, with classroom management being about 50 percent of her job.

"Teachers have the ability to change a lot of kids' lives but it may not always be through the subject matter," she said. "You have to come in every day and do your

absolute best with all 120 'babies' that you see all day. They definitely come to us as middle school students but they leave as high school students.

"It's great to get to know them and really see the person they're going to be."



*Leslie Newman '06M*



## Jason Baldwin Named Distinguished Alumnus

**Jason Baldwin '97**, who teaches sixth grade social studies at Brawley Middle School in Mooresville, N.C., truly cares about all students and they recognize this, according to his principal, Roberta Ellis. Because of this, Ellis said, students are successful in his classes, even those who are "at risk."



*Jason Baldwin '97 and student*

That level of dedication and commitment to students led the Watson School of Education Alumni Chapter to present Baldwin with the school's 2005 Distinguished Alumnus Award. The award recognizes alumni who have made significant contributions to education and who represent the Watson School's commitment to excellence. In her nomination letter, Ellis made it clear that Baldwin exhibits those characteristics.

"His integrated units incorporate math, science and language arts on a daily basis," she said. "This year he volunteered to teach a 'reading in the content area' class that was primarily made up of unmotivated boys. He was able to incorporate many reading activities as he kept these students active and excited about learning. If you visited his classroom, you would not recognize these students as being 'at risk.'"

Baldwin was also recognized for his use of multimedia resources and technology in the classroom. He uses computer demonstrations, video streaming and Internet research to enhance student learning and participation. He also effectively uses the school's web site to provide information and frequently sends student progress reports via the Internet.

In addition to teaching, Baldwin assists with many school clubs and activities, including coaching the boys' soccer team and coordinating the annual geography bee.

## 2005-06 WSE Alumni Chapter Council

The officers and members of the 2005-06 WSE Alumni Chapter Council are listed below. The council is responsible for providing leadership to the chapter and developing policies and plans in conjunction with the dean of the Watson School. The council welcomes your ideas and suggestions.

### Chapter Council Officers

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#### Instructional Technology Chair

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### Chapter Council Members

Anita Brown '90, '97M, '99M  
Becky Fancher '78  
Norm Melton '74  
Carolyn Brumit '68  
Mary Gaddy '69  
Sara Messer '66  
Nancy Cates '70  
Ann Grose '90  
Carol Midgett '04  
Donna Davis '92  
Alva Ingram '83  
Leslie Pridgen '98  
Julia Davis '78  
Birty Lightner '76  
Pat C. Smith '72



## Tracy Wilson Thomas Receives Math Honor

When **Tracy Wilson Thomas '01** learned last fall that she had been named Wayne County Public Schools 2005-06 Outstanding Elementary School Mathematics Teacher, the celebration was a family affair.

Thomas, a second-grade teacher at Meadow Lane Elementary School, was able to share the moment with her mother, who is a kindergarten teacher assistant at the school, and her grandmother, who is now retired but worked in the school cafeteria at that time.

In fact, the school is like a second home to Thomas, who was once a student there herself. After receiving her degree in elementary education at UNCW, she returned to Wayne County looking for a job and Meadow Lane was her first choice.

"I had other options but I kept holding out for Meadow Lane," she said. "My heart was here."

The award Thomas received is given annually by the N.C. Council of Teachers of Mathematics to the K-5 teacher who best succeeds in motivating students to excel in math. Principal Celia James said Thomas is an enthusiastic and energetic teacher.

"She loves what she does, and she is just a strong example for students," she said. "I think she is the type of teacher that everyone is searching for for their child."

Thomas was previously recognized as Meadow Lane's Beginning Teacher of the Year. Last year, she became a lead teacher with the North Carolina Partnership for



*Tracy Wilson Thomas with students*

Improving Mathematics and Science Program, or PIMS. In that role, she delivers staff development to other teachers to improve math instruction.



### *A Note* from the Alumni President

*Janis C. Norris*

The WSE Alumni Chapter has had a busy and productive year. We have continued to focus on recognizing excellence in teaching, promoting educational opportunities for students, mentoring students and fundraising.

In spring 2005, the chapter awarded two scholarships. The recipients were **Dory Stanfill** and **Dawn Allen**, who are both pursuing degrees in Elementary Education. The scholarships are for students who have been accepted to the Watson School, and they are based on academic excellence and personal recommendation.

The chapter's Distinguished Alumnus Achievement Award recognizes alumni who have made significant contributions to education and who represent the Watson School's commitment to excellence. The 2005 recipient of the award was **Jason Baldwin '97**, who is a social studies teacher in Mooresville, N.C.

The Watson School was proud to have one of its graduates named a North Carolina Teacher of the Year for 2005-06. **Wendy Miller '87** received her degree in special education. During the fall semester, the Alumni Chapter brought Wendy to campus to speak to students and faculty.

WSE graduates continue to stay connected with the university in a variety of ways. As the new Education Building and the

North Carolina Teachers Legacy Hall were under construction, many of you sent donations to support the student lounge, which has been officially named the Alumni Lounge. It is a comfortable and attractive area in which students can eat, study and relax, and you can be proud of your role in making it possible.

We have a new challenge this year, and we hope that you will help again. The chapter's two annual scholarships need to be endowed so that we can ensure their continuity. In order to endow the scholarships, we must raise \$25,000. I know we can all understand the value of scholarships as the cost of higher education continues to rise. As educators, we value our profession and want to see it grow with talented new graduates.

If you want to help in this effort, please make out your check to UNCW and note that it is designated for the Watson School of Education Alumni Chapter Scholarship. You will find a donation envelope inserted in this issue of *Connections* for your convenience. While we may not raise the entire amount all at once, I have no doubt that we will be successful in creating a WSE Alumni Chapter Endowed Scholarship. Students will benefit for years to come.

Best regards and sincere thanks for your ongoing support.

**Janis C. Norris '81M**  
**WSE Alumni Chapter President**



## WSE Alum Wins Caribbean Trip for Military Spouses

In February, **Vicki Thacker '91** and nine other military spouses spent a week in the Caribbean courtesy of *Good Morning America*. Thacker won the trip as the grand prize of the "Girls' Week Out" contest, which asked contestants to write a 500-word essay telling their own story of how they have lived through trials and triumphs "with a little help from their friends."

Thacker's essay chronicled the work of her circle of friends who support Marine, Army, Air Force and Navy families by volunteering their time and talents to others while their spouses are deployed.

"Many hours are volunteered through the Family Team Building Program in order to give families support," she said. "Military families are usually far away from home and don't have a support system in place if there is a crisis. Military spouses don't get enough

credit for holding down jobs and taking care of the families while their loved ones are deployed."

Thacker chose a group of women to accompany her who have put in many hours of volunteer service. The women partied in style aboard the luxurious *Norwegian Jewel* cruise ship.

"We had a fantastic time," she said. "We'll all have fond memories of this trip."

Thacker recently left her position as a seventh grade math and science teacher at Tucker Creek Middle School in Craven County. She and her family moved back to Surf City for the next military assignment for her husband, Darrell, a 1983 graduate of UNCW and Alumnus of the Year in 2003. He is taking over as commanding officer of the New River Air Station in Jacksonville.



Vicki Thacker (standing, third from right) and friends aboard the Norwegian Jewel.

## Sharon Byrdsong Named National Middle School Principal of the Year

**Sharon Byrdsong '98M**, principal of Azalea Gardens Middle School in Norfolk, Va., was named the 2006 MetLife/NASSP National Middle School Principal of the Year. She received the award for demonstrating excellence in resolving complex problems involving the local community and the school and for her consistent success in improving the overall school learning environment.



Byrdsong came to Azalea Gardens Middle School, an urban school with an enrollment of 807 students (46% of whom are on free/reduced lunch program) in 2000 and began working with teachers and staff members to establish a school-wide sense of responsibility, trust, pride and high achievement. Her school improvement efforts have centered on proven best practices such as professional learning communities, personalization and a rigorous curriculum.

Following a needs assessment that revealed an atmosphere of low expectations that was reflected in the school's state test scores, Byrdsong designed and implemented an improvement program with dramatic results. Azalea students scored in the nineties in all tested areas of the 2004 assessments, the highest scores for middle schools in the Norfolk area.

Byrdsong said it is the faces of her students that motivate her each morning. "When these children walk through the doors, I see myself in so many of them," she said. "I came from a working family background, and I knew that education would be the key to moving forward from the place I was in. I know I can make a difference, and I know education will be the key. I am inspired by my students. It's all about them."

### 1960s

**Linda Nance Hayes '69** retired in 2005 from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System after 35 years of teaching K-3. During her career, she was recognized for chairing the top Kids Voting program in the nation. She was one of the first education graduates from UNCW and earned a M.Ed. from UNC Charlotte in 1977. She and her husband, Richard, reside in Charlotte.



### 1980s

**Teresa Allen Harper '88** was selected as the 2005-06 Whiteville City Schools Exceptional Children's Teacher of the Year.

**Mary Mills-McAllister '87** is principal of Silverdale Elementary School in Onslow County.

**Donna "Rose" Hodges Simmons '89** has received National Board Certification.

**Joy Owens Usher '89** received her master's degree in Library Science from East Carolina University. She is a librarian at Harrells Christian Academy in Harrells, N.C.

**Linda Carlton Wells '81** was named the Wallace-Rose Hill High School Teacher of the Year.



## 1990s

**Karen Ericsson Black '92** received National Board Certification in 2005.

**Renee Bradford '95** is pursuing a master's degree in Reading Education at Appalachian State University.

**Brian Etheridge '95** was hired in March as the new president of Leadership North Carolina.

**Yvonne "Gidget" Kidd '92** was elected to a six-year term on the Asheboro, N.C. City School Board in Dec. 2005. She is a preschool director at First United Methodist Church in Asheboro.

**Kimberlee Nappier Badalucco '98** has received certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

**Siobhan Hicks Tirado '98** completed a master's degree in special education online through Grand Canyon University. She is working as a substitute teacher in the Dayton, Ohio, area and looks forward to returning full-time to special education. She has coached a high school girls' swim team for the past 6 years.

**Jennifer Wescott '90** has published a book entitled, "Moving in Faith." She is the founder and director of Transformed by the Word Ministries.

## 2000s

**Auburn Carpenter '02, '04M** is education projects manager at the Texas State Aquarium in Corpus Christi. She is working with Project Sea and Learn, bringing live video programming on marine life and sea exploration to students in grades 3-5 through advanced two-way technology.

**G. Scott Chattin '01M** was named Outstanding Teacher of the Year at Southeastern Community College. Chattin is an instructor in English.

**Kristin Christakis '05** teaches kindergarten at Winstead Elementary School. Her mother teaches at the same school.

**Elizabeth Jackson '04** is in her second year of teaching seventh grade math at Western Harnett Middle School. She coaches girls' basketball and is interested in pursuing a graduate degree in Instructional Technology.

**Robin Wilson Lamberty '03 Licensure, '05M** is 2005-06 Teacher of the Year for Cape Fear Elementary School in Rocky Point, N.C. She received her master's degree in Language and Literacy from UNCW in Dec. 2005.

**Brandon Mize '03** was named Teacher of the Week by the *Sanford Herald* in February. He teaches third grade at Greenwood Elementary School in Sanford, N.C.

**Donna Mooneyham '04 Licensure** has been selected to study in Japan for three weeks in October as part of the Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund Scholar teacher program. She will live with a Japanese family and study special education. Mooneyham teaches at Shallotte Middle School.

**Julie Pollock '01** teaches seventh grade at Hunter's Creek Middle School in Jacksonville, N.C. As a project for her master's program at UNCW, she developed Olympic Fest 2006 at the school and helped students plan and organize the event.

**Susan Shroub '01** is assistant principal of Rose Hill-Magnolia Elementary School in Rose Hill, N.C.

**Shawn Wilson '00** is the new principal of Rose Hill-Magnolia Elementary School.

**Stephanie Woodcock '03** was named Sampson County 2005-06 Teacher of the Year.

## Weddings

**Ashley Allen '97** and Timothy Dellis on June 18, 2005. The couple resides in Bahama, N.C.

**Natalie Barrow '06** and Lawrence Caddell on Dec. 10, 2005. The couple resides in Wilmington.

**Elizabeth Hayes '00** and Mark Gould on July 16, 2005. The couple resides in Burlington, N.C.

**Tricia Kozee '01** and David Prevette on Oct. 1, 2005. The couple resides in Winston-Salem.

**Natalie Leamy '05** and Benjamin Overton on Dec. 17, 2005. The couple resides in Wilmington.

**Jennifer Patterson '00** and Charles Mickey on Oct. 22, 2005. The couple resides in Winston-Salem.

**Heather Poythress '05** and Jonathan Jarvi on Nov. 26, 2005. The couple resides in Wilson, N.C.

**Candace Pullen '03** and Brandon Hart on June 11, 2005. The couple resides in Wilmington.

**Shannon Smith '05** and Dustin Hoertt on Sept. 3, 2005. The couple resides in Swansboro, N.C.

**Katherine Williams '99** and Eric Lanier on June 18, 2005. The couple resides in Wilmington.

## Births

**To Cathryn Lancaster Helms '92** and her husband David, a son, David "Parks" Jr., on Sept. 1, 2005.

**To Crystal Ward Reilly '03** and her husband Joshua, a daughter, Isabella Anne, on Oct. 20, 2005.



# Donor Report 2005

The Watson School of Education gratefully acknowledges the donors who made financial contributions to the school between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2005. We appreciate the generous support of our alumni and friends.

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Sonja Maria Adger	'84	Elizabeth Faulk Bridges	'92	John A Davis		Sally Ann Gill	'91	Phillip Hou	
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Marcus Avent		Philip Monroe Brown Jr		Mary Kay Dodson		Peter Gratale		Leo Jacobs	
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Jennifer Lee Matthews	'91		Mary Trombello Smith	'76	Peter Neil Wepler		Deborah Whitehead Zackman	'00
Erik Michael Mattingly	'02		Mary Ann Smith	'91	Ronnie P Wepler	'95	Beth Ahlman Zingler	'96
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Peggy Ann Richards	'93							
Jessica Michelle Rickert	'04							
Deborah Southall Rivenbark	'82							
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Natasha Gore Robinson	'98							
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Harold D Russell	'90							
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Donald Scott	'03							
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Richard B Seltzer	'02							
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Lori Parker Sharpe	'85							
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## Keep us posted

Have you recently started a new job? Received an award or earned a graduate degree? Moved to a new home or started a family? The Watson School of Education and UNCW Alumni Relations would like to share your accomplishments in future editions of *Connections* and on the alumni Web site. Write, call or e-mail to keep us posted on where you are and what you're doing.

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Faculty members congratulate Spring 2006 graduates during the Watson School of Education departmental ceremony. UNCW's Commencement activities were held Saturday, May 13. (UNCW/Jamie Moncrief)



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